

Judith Enck
Regional Administrator
USEPA Region 2
290 Broadway
New York ,NY 10007

Dear Regional Administrator Enck

We are writing to you as a group of concerned parents regarding EPA's action at the former site of the Columbia Smelting and Refining Works, now the Red Hook ball fields used by our children for soccer and baseball.

The fields are highly contaminated with lead, and possibly other substances, and are the subject of a removal action that is to be conducted by the New York City Department of Parks under an agreement with EPA.

At a meeting in July 2015, EPA stated that it would take several years, until 2018, for the fields to be cleaned up. Initial actions were taken by the city in 2012, and EPA has been testing the fields since at least 2014. As we understand it, the agreement between EPA and NYC is not even signed yet. While we realize that some the contaminated fields (fields 5 through 8) are currently closed, it does not seem as though this cleanup should be a 3 (or more) year project.

In addition, we are concerned about the fields that are currently open, and wonder about current exposure. This past fall, many of us witnessed dust cover our high school children while they played soccer, much of it on their hands and faces. We were covered in dust just as spectators at a soccer game. We watched scores of younger children playing or practicing soccer at various fields in the area, perhaps with no knowledge of the contamination problem. While it is admirable that the City wants to keep fields open for use, we are concerned about the safety of those using the fields.

The 3 year schedule provided by EPA should be re-evaluated. We also note that this 3 year schedule only addresses the grossly contaminated closed fields (ball fields 5 through 9) and does not even address the contaminated fields currently being used (soccer fields 1- 6 and ball fields 1-4) , which are also highly contaminated with lead, nor the fields being tested just this month. The proposed schedule could grow longer as more contamination is discovered.

We are concerned that action is not being taken in a timely manner, and wonder if action by the City or the EPA at both the closed and open fields can be expedited, or alternatively , if some interim steps can be taken to protect our children, such as covering the open fields with artificial turf. It is difficult to understand why it would take so many years to rip up and replace these ball fields. It does not seem as though the technology here is very complicated. Smaller municipalities replace or upgrade fields in a manner of weeks or months all the time.

As the warmer weather is just around the corner, we are asking you to look into this matter and help us protect our children by ensuring that the remediation is undertaken more quickly. We urge EPA to make this a priority and request that the City expedite this action.

Sincerely,

Parents:

Elliott Ingerman
Linda Ingerman
Jeremy Marshall
Jennifer Marshall
Bill Brodsky
Peter Rohslau
Betty Rohslau
Jennifer Frantz
Stephanie Cherry
Sarah Ludington
Daric Schlesselman
Darrin Fallick (Athletic Director)
Rachel London
Stephanie Silhavy
Max Connolly
Melissa Marks
Vicente Caride
Eric Pakula
Chrissy Springer
Andy Springer
Jennifer Nelson
Jim Cameron
Kimmerly Scott
Patrick Nuti
Alejandra Parra
Carol West
Marina Rasina
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Denver Butson
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